

Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

Opposites Detract: *The Burlingame Treaty vs. Chinese Exclusion Act*

Standard: I. Culture
II. Time, Continuity, and Change
III. People, Places, and Environments
VI. Power, Authority, and Governance
VII. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
X. Civic Ideals and Practices

Grade Level: 9–12

Objectives: The student will:
● Compare and contrast two primary source documents
● Analyze the treatment of the Chinese in the United States since the late 1800s.

Time: 1 class period

Materials: Documents: **1868**: *The Burlingame Treaty*
1882: *The Chinese Exclusion Act*

Resources: Reading: *Chinese Subjects in the United States* (pp. 1–2)

Exercises: *Opposites Detract*

Procedures:

Note: It is at the teacher's discretion to use the Reading Before or After the analysis of the two documents.

- 1.** Provide students with documents, the *Burlingame Treaty* and the *Chinese Exclusion Act*.
- 2.** Distribute the exercise, *Opposites Detract: Burlingame Treaty vs. Chinese Exclusion Act*.
- 3.** Determine if students will work independently, in pairs, or in small groups.
- 4.** Explain to students that they are to gather all information for the chart from the two documents. *IF* information is not available for a particular section, they may use "NA" (Not Applicable) as the answer.
- 5.** First, complete the items under "Items for Analysis" and review answers with the students.

6. Then, complete the areas below asking students to provide a synopsis for each document. Have students read their summaries.

7. Discuss the foundational differences between an act and a treaty.

Extension Activities:

1. Refer to the activity, "Exclusion by Law," for a more in-depth examination of the Chinese Exclusion Act.

2. Anson Burlingame was a fascinating diplomat. For more about him, read "The Burlingame-Seward Treaty, 1868" at

<http://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/Burlingame-SewardTreaty>